

The following claims are presented for examination:

1. (Original) A method of conducting an auction, said method comprising:
entering, at a data processing system, a first bid into said auction in behalf of a first bidder;

receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from a second bidder,
wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to determine a bid variable based, at least in part, on the identity of said first bidder; and

entering, at said data processing system, a second bid into said auction in behalf of said second bidder, wherein said second bid comprises said bid variable as determined by said data processing system.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising withholding, at said data processing system, the identity of said first bidder from said second bidder until at least after said bid package has been received at said data processing system.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said second bid variable to 100% of said first bid variable.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said second bid variable to a value that is more than 100% of said first bid variable.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said second bid variable to a value that is less than 100% of said first bid variable.

6. (Currently Amended) A method of conducting an auction, said method comprising:

entering, at **[[said]] a** data processing system, a first bid into said auction in behalf of a first bidder, wherein said first bid comprises a first bid variable;

receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from a second bidder,
wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to determine a second bid variable based, at least in part, on the identity of said first bidder and on said first bid variable; and

entering, at said data processing system, a second bid into said auction in behalf of said second bidder, wherein said second bid comprises said second bid variable as determined by said data processing system.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[3]] **6** further comprising withholding, at said data processing system, the identity of said first bidder from said second bidder until at least after said bid package has been received at said data processing system.

8. (Previously Presented) A method of conducting an auction, said method comprising:

entering, at a data processing system, a first bid into said auction in behalf of a first bidder, wherein said first bid comprises a first bid variable;

entering, at said data processing system, a second bid into said auction in behalf of a second bidder, wherein said second bid comprises a second bid variable;

receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from a third bidder, wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to determine a third bid variable based, at least in part, on the identity of said first bidder and on the identity of said second bidder; and

entering, at said data processing system, a third bid into said auction in behalf of said third bidder, wherein said third bid comprises said third bid variable as determined by said data processing system.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising withholding, at said data processing system, the identity of said first bidder and the identity of said second bidder from said third bidder until at least after said bid package has been received at said data processing system from said third bidder.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said third bid variable to a value that is more than 100% of the maximum of said first bid variable and said second bid variable.

11. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said third bid variable to a value that is more than 100% of the minimum of said first bid variable and said second bid variable.

12. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said third bid variable to a value that is less than 100% of the maximum of said first bid variable and said second bid variable.

13. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said third bid variable to a value that is less than 100% of the minimum of said first bid variable and said second bid variable.

14. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to set said third bid variable to a value that is equal to the average of said first bid variable and said second bid variable.

15. (Original) A method of conducting an auction, said method comprising:

- entering, at a data processing system, a first bid into said auction in behalf of a first bidder;
- entering, at said data processing system, a second bid into said auction in behalf of a second bidder;
- receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from a third bidder, wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to determine a third bid variable based, at least in part, on the identity of said first bidder and to ignore the identity of said second bidder in determining said third bid variable; and
- entering, at said data processing system, a third bid into said auction in behalf of said third bidder, wherein said third bid comprises said third bid variable.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 further comprising withholding, at said data processing system, the identity of said first bidder and the identity of said second bidder from said third bidder until at least after said bid package has been received at said data processing system.

17. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting an auction in behalf of an auction solicitor, said method comprising:

- receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from a first bidder, wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to:
 - (i) enter a bid in said auction in behalf of said first bidder in response to each bid entered in said auction in behalf of a second bidder, and

(ii) determine a bid for said first bidder that is less advantageous to said auction solicitor than the most recent bid entered in said auction in behalf of said second bidder; entering, at said data processing system, a first bid into said auction in behalf of said first bidder; entering, at said data processing system, a second bid into said auction in behalf of said second bidder; determining, at said data processing system, said third bid that is less advantageous to said auction solicitor than said second bid; and entering, at said data processing system, said bid into said auction in behalf of said first bidder.

18. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting an auction in behalf of an auction solicitor, said method comprising:

entering, at a data processing system, a first bid into said auction in behalf of a first bidder, wherein said bid comprises a first bid variable;

receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from a second bidder directing said data processing system to determine a second bid variable based, at least in part, on said first bid variable and such that said second bid variable is less advantageous to said auction solicitor than said first bid variable; and

entering, at said data processing system, a second bid in said auction in behalf of said second bidder, wherein said second bid comprises said second bid variable as determined by said data processing system.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18 further comprising refraining, at said data processing system, from disclosing said first bid variable to said second bidder until at least after said second bid has been entered into said auction.

20. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting an auction, said method comprising: receiving, at a data processing system, a bid package from a first bidder directing said data processing system to:

(i) prepare a first bid in response to a second bid entered into said auction in behalf of a second bidder, and

(ii) wait an unpredictable amount of time after said second bid is entered into said auction before entering said first bid into said auction in behalf of said first bidder;
entering, at said data processing system, said second bid into said auction in behalf of said second bidder;
preparing, at said data processing system, said first bid in response to said second bid; and
waiting, at said data processing system, an unpredictable amount of time before entering said first bid into said auction in behalf of said first bidder.

21. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting an auction, said method comprising: establishing, at a data processing system, a first default value in said auction; receiving, at said data processing system, a first bid package from a first bidder, wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to:

(i) determine a first bid variable based, at least in part, on said first default value, and
(ii) enter a first bid in said auction in behalf of said first bidder;
entering said first bid in said auction in behalf of said first bidder, wherein said first bid comprises said first bid variable.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21 further comprising establishing, at said data processing system, a second default value in said auction;

wherein said bid package further directs said data processing system to (iii) determine a second bid variable based, at least in part, on said second default value; and
wherein said first bid further comprises said second bid variable.

23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21 wherein said bid package further directs said data processing system to (iii) determine a second bid variable based, at least in part, on publicly-available information; and
wherein said first bid further comprises said second bid variable.

24. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting a sealed-bid auction in behalf of an auction solicitor, said method comprising:

entering, at a data processing system, a first sealed bid in said sealed-bid auction in behalf of a first bidder;

entering, at said data processing system, a second sealed bid in said sealed-bid auction in behalf of a second bidder;

ranking, at said data processing system, the advantageousness of said first sealed bid and said second sealed bid to said auction solicitor;

outputting from said data processing system the ranking of said first sealed bid and said second sealed bid to said first bidder and to said second bidder;

withholding, at said data processing system, the contents of said first sealed bid from said second bidder until after the opportunity for said second bidder to submit a revised second bid into said sealed-bid auction has expired; and

withholding, at said data processing system, the contents of said second sealed bid from said first bidder until after the opportunity for said first bidder to submit a revised first bid into said sealed-bid auction has expired.

25. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting a sealed-bid auction in behalf of an auction solicitor, which sealed-bid auction comprises a bidding phase and a resolution phase, said method comprising:

entering, at a data processing system and during said bidding phase, a first sealed bid into said sealed-bid auction in behalf of a first bidder;

entering, at said data processing system and during said bidding phase, a second sealed bid into said auction in behalf of a second bidder;

ranking, at said data processing system and during said bidding phase, the advantageousness of said first sealed bid and said second bid to said auction solicitor; and

outputting from said data processing system and during said bidding phase, said ranking to said first bidder.

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25 further comprising entering, at said data processing system and during said bidding phase, a revised first sealed bid into said sealed-bid auction in behalf of said first bidder.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26 further comprising withholding, at said data processing system, the contents of said second sealed bid from said first bidder until said resolution phase.

28. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting a plurality of auctions, said method comprising:

entering, at a data processing system, a first bid into a first auction in behalf of a first bidder;

receiving, at said data processing system, a bid package from said first bidder, wherein said bid package directs said data processing system to:

(i) determine a first bid variable based, at least in part, on whether said first bidder has won said first auction or not won said first auction, and

(ii) enter a second bid into a second auction in behalf of said first bidder; entering, at said data processing system, a second bid into said second auction in behalf of said first bidder, wherein said second bid comprises said second bid variable as determined by said data processing system.

29. (Withdrawn) A method of conducting an auction in behalf of an auction solicitor and for a scope, said method comprising:

entering, at a data processing system, a first bid into said auction, wherein said first bid is for all of said scope;

entering, at said data processing system, a first plurality of bids into said auction, wherein each of said first plurality of bids is for a portion of said scope as partitioned in a first dimension and said first plurality of bids in aggregate is for all of said scope; and

entering, at said data processing system, a second plurality of bids into said auction, wherein each of said second plurality of bids is for a portion of said scope as partitioned in a second dimension and said second plurality of bids in aggregate is for all of said scope.

30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29 further comprising:

ranking, at said data processing system, the advantageousness of said first bid to said auction solicitor in comparison to the sum of said first plurality of bids and said second plurality of bids; and

outputting from said data processing system an indicium of whether said first bid alone or said first plurality of bids or said second plurality of bids have won said auction.